

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on January 22, 2010. An RCE and Replacement Drawings are being filed along with this amendment. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-9, 12-15, 21-23, 26, and 31 were pending in that action and all claims were rejected. With the present response, claims 1, 3-6, 12-15, 21-23, 26, and 31 are amended, and the remaining claims are unchanged. Consideration and allowance of all claims are respectfully solicited in light of the following comments.

Specification/Drawings Objections

On pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Applicant's FIGS. 4, 5, and 7-9. In particular, the Examiner stated that the drawings included computer hyperlinks and/or other computer executable code in violation of MPEP §608.01. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner replace the previous drawings in the application with the Replacement Drawing Sheets being included along with this amendment. The included sheets have the computer hyperlinks and/or executable code removed. In their place, the generic placeholder term of "hyperlink/computer-executable code" has been entered instead. Applicant respectfully contends that the replacement sheets satisfy the requirements of MPEP §608.01 and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection. Additionally, Applicant respectfully requests that in the next Office Action Summary that the Examiner acknowledges that the drawings have been accepted.

35 USC §103 Rejections

On pages 3-9 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected all of the claims under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Abelow U.S. Pat. No. 5,999,908 (hereinafter "Abelow") in view of Bair et al. U.S. Pat. No. 6,108,668 (hereinafter "Bair") and in further view of Chatani U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2006/0253399 (hereinafter "Chatani"). For at least the reasons discussed below, Applicant respectfully contends that the claims include limitations and combinations of limitations that are not anticipated by or obvious in view of the cited references. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully contends that the claims are patentable and respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

Claim 1:

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the additional step of “providing, over a computer network, a subscription form to a recipient, wherein the subscription form enables the recipient to subscribe to a query service, the subscription form including a plurality of editable fields that allow for the recipient to input information into the fields, the plurality of user editable fields including fields that correspond to a survey name, a survey introduction, a survey expiration date, a responder anonymity status, and a multiple submissions status, the multiple submissions status indicating whether or not completed surveys will be submitted to multiple parties, one of the multiple parties including the recipient.” An illustrative embodiment of such a subscription form is shown in Applicant’s FIG. 4 and described on page 14, line 22 to page 15, line 10 of Applicant’s specification.

In light of the amendment, claim 1 now recites providing both the subscription form described above and the previously recited query form. In rejecting the claim on page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the claimed query form is disclosed by the Abelow customer probes. Applicant respectfully contends that the Abelow customer probes do not teach or suggest both the claimed subscription and query forms. For instance, the Abelow customer probes are described in its column 27 lines 8-14 as including “Multiple choice Probes, Scale Probes, True/False Probes, Checklist Probes, Short answer Probes, Essay answer Probes, Matching Probes, etc.” Abelow does not disclose that any of its probes include the features recited in the claim such as a survey introduction, a responder anonymity status, or a multiple submission status. Accordingly, at least as amended claim 1 is distinguishable from Abelow. The other cited references of Bair and Chatani similarly do not teach or suggest such limitations.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully contends that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and that the claim be allowed.

Claim 15:

Claim 15 has been amended to recite that the tools provided for altering a pre-configured survey template are associated with a plurality of columns. The amended claim goes on to

describe six of the plurality of columns in detail. For instance, the claim recites “a first one of the plurality of columns” including for each question in an electronic survey the text corresponding to the question, a second one of the plurality of columns indicating a type of response for each question in the survey, a third one of the plurality of columns including branching logic for each question in the survey, the branching logic dictating which question is presented next based on an answer to a previous question, a fourth one of the plurality of columns including user actuatable buttons that facilitate editing the question texts in the first one of the plurality of columns, a fifth one of the plurality of columns including user actuatable buttons that facilitate deleting the question texts in the first one of the plurality of columns, and a sixth one of the plurality of columns including arrows that facilitate establishing an order in which the question texts are presented” (emphasis added). An illustrative embodiment of such features is shown in Applicant’s FIG. 5 and is described on page 15, line 27 to page 17, line 22 of Applicant’s specification.

In rejecting the claim on page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the recited tools for altering a pre-configured survey template are disclosed by the Abelow interactive evaluations and electronic suggestion pad. The Abelow interactive evaluations and electronic suggestion pad are not however associated with a plurality of columns as is recited in the amended claim. The Abelow interactive evaluations and electronic suggestion pad certainly do not disclose the specific six columns recited in the claim. For instance, Abelow column 32, lines 31-37 states that its interactive evaluations include “a button, function key or other means [that] enables a Customer to initiate a Customer Development Interaction (CDI) whenever desired” and that its electronic suggestion pad includes “a button, function key or other means [that] enables the Customer to open an electronic notepad that records and stores Customer suggestions for the Vendor.” Accordingly, Abelow never teaches or suggests a plurality of columns and clearly does not teach or suggest the specific types of columns recited in the amended claim.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully contends that claim 15 is patentable over the cited references. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and that the claim be allowed.

Claim 26:

Claim 26 has been amended to recite that “the survey configuration data further compris[es] an indication of a name of the survey, an indication of whether or not the survey is anonymous, an indication of whether or not the survey will include multiple submissions, and an indication of a theme of the survey.” Illustrative embodiments of such features are shown for example in Applicant’s FIGS. 4 and 5.

On pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the claimed survey configuration data is disclosed by the Abelow triggers. The Abelow triggers do not however include the features included in the amended claim. Column 29, line 67 to column 30, line 4 of Abelow states for example that “triggers include areas such as metrics that are crucial to organizational performance like productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, the rate at which jobs are learned by new employees (time to proficiency), identification of re-engineering opportunities, etc.” Neither Abelow nor any of the other cited references teaches or suggests survey configuration data having the features recited in the amended claim.

Claim 26 has also been amended to recite “automatically integrating the structured responses into one of a plurality of pre-identified application programs, the plurality of pre-identified application programs including an electronic mail program, a contact management program, and a scheduler program.” An illustrative embodiment is described on page 12, lines 21-26 of Applicant’s specification.

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the previously recited integration of structured responses into a pre-identified application is disclosed by Abelow column 29, line 1 through column 38, line 6. In particular, the Examiner stated that the structured responses are disclosed by the Abelow quantitative answers. The Abelow quantitative answers are never however automatically integrated into one of a plurality of pre-identified application programs. Abelow only discloses performing an error check on the quantitative answers. For instance, column 36, lines 30-38 of Abelow states that “[i]n a quantitative probe (such as a 1-to-5 scale question or a multiple choice question) it is easy to give quantitative answers 296 and check that for errors 300; the Customer can simply press a number on a

numeric keypad 296 and the CB-PD Module can determine if the answer is within a specified range” (emphasis added).

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully contends that claim 26 is patentable over the cited references. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and that the claim be allowed.

Claims 3-6, 8-9, 12-14, 21-23, and 31:

Claims 3-6, 8-9, 12-14, 21-23, and 31 are dependent claims. Applicant respectfully contends that the claims are patentable at least based on their dependencies upon the patentable independent claims discussed above. Additionally, several of the claims have been amended to recite new limitations and/or new combinations of limitations that have not been previously considered by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully contends that these limitations and combinations of limitations are patentable over the cited art. Claim 12 for instance has been amended to recite that “providing a plurality of pre-configured query templates for modification by the recipient, the plurality of pre-configured query templates being identified by subject matter and including a customer service template, a web site feedback template, a meeting questionnaire template, and an employee satisfaction survey template.” An illustrative example of such features is shown in Applicant’s FIG. 6. Applicant has carefully reviewed the cited references and respectfully contends that none of the references teaches or suggests such a limitation. The other claims similarly have limitations that are not taught or suggested by the cited references, and Applicant therefore respectfully contends that the claims are patentable based upon their own merits. Each of the claim amendments is well supported throughout the application as originally filed. Exemplary support for the amendments is listed below.

The claim 3 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 10, elements 400, 402, 404, and on page 22, lines 3-16 of the specification. The claim 4 amendment is supported for example on page 16, lines 1-6 of the specification. The claim 5 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 5 and on page 18, lines 8-14 of the specification. The claim 6 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 5 and on page 16, line 7 to page 18, line 7 of the specification. The claim 12 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 6 and on page 18, line 27 to page 19,

line 10 of the specification. The claim 13 amendment is supported for example by FIGS. 7 and 8, and on page 19, line 19 to page 20, line 8 of the specification. The claim 14 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 8. The claim 21 and 22 amendments are supported for example by FIG. 7. The claim 23 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 9, and the claim 31 amendment is supported for example by FIG. 6.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, consideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully solicited. Applicant also respectfully requests that in the event that the Examiner does not find the independent claims patentable, that the Examiner consider allowance of one or more of the dependent claims. The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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